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ABSTRACT

The document describes pilot programs at three community colleges and one university aimed at providing vocational opportunities for those 65 years or older and underwritten by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. Los Angeles Valley College's Senior Adult Program placed 101 men and women in part-time jobs, and its Gold Card Program, which allowed those over 60 free access to college activities, enrolled 707 older students in credit courses and over 2,000 in non-credit courses. Project Elderly at Miami-Dade Community College located jobs for the elderly, established a clearinghouse for those wishing to do volunteer work, and developed educational curricula for the older student. New York City Community College undertook a two-year project to investigate career opportunities for those over 45 in Brooklyn, and established public information desks regarding job opportunities for older workers at ten banks in the area. Pace University established an Active Retirement Center where older citizens could continue to learn, and is now expanding the center and developing a job and volunteer placement program. Comments by Merrell M. Clark, vice president of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation are included. (LH)

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"I HAVE RETURNED TO LIFE"

Community Colleges and Older Americans: A New Response to a New Resource

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Why This Booklet?

Today's 23 million Americans aged 65 and above are the healthiest and best-educated in the history of our country, harvest of the hundreds of billions of dollars the nation has spent in health care and education in the past century. But this great human resource is largely underutilized.

This paradox suggested a number of questions to The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. Chief among them: What vocational needs do older Americans who have been drawn into the orbits of community colleges have? How can community colleges best respond to those needs?

Beginning in 1974, the Clark Foundation awarded a small group of grants designed to find answers to those questions. The purpose was exploratory. Each program that resulted was a pilot effort. The Foundation dealt only with colleges that already had large numbers of older students registered for courses and cultural/recreational opportunities. In each case, the school agreed to continue whatever portion of the experiments proved workable.

It became obvious that classroom experiences, although important, do not satisfy a small but significant group (5% to 20%) of retired men and women who had joined a variety of community college programs. This group also had a vocational objective; its members wanted work or service roles, not just educational activities to fill new leisure hours.

These vocational needs are vital to their well-being. They are just as valid as the vocational requirements of younger men and women in college.

It is of course true that many retired men and women are satisfied with their involvement in campus classes and cultural activities. But to expect that retired men and women should be involved *only* in such programs reflects one of the prejudices regarding age that should not be allowed to remain in the face of their serious demands for work and service experiences. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation believes that these vocational needs can be met—met efficiently—by the nation's community and junior colleges.

This report discusses experimental efforts of three community colleges in Los Angeles, Miami, New York City and one private university—also in New

York City—to increase contributory roles in society for older men and women. All of the pilot programs were underwritten in whole or in part by the Clark Foundation.

Five Objectives: This project had a narrow, specific focus: not to increase educational opportunities for older men and women, but to learn how community colleges working with other institutions in the community could provide vocational opportunities for the elderly. Generally speaking, the overall objective was to afford additional options to older men and women who want to continue contributing to their community in some fashion.

Specifically, the Clark Foundation had the following reasons for providing the grants:

- To help involve retired men and women in significant community service roles, e.g., as para-professionals in education, in community health and in counseling;
- To help return older persons to the general job market;
- To service their education and training requirements for filling these jobs;
- To build on the resources community colleges have to develop such programs;
- To guarantee the continuance of the experiment by requiring that the grantees continue the effort, if successful, after the Clark grant expired.

The Clark Foundation is issuing "I Have Returned to Life" to share the experiences and successes of these experiments. The Foundation hopes administrators of community and junior colleges will examine those models that can be duplicated and consider both the vocational needs of our older men and women and the *mutual* gain that could result from new, innovative programming designed to meet them. ■

The National Context:

"The Quality of Public Services Will Deteriorate if Talents of the Elderly Are Not Used"

Countless studies have recommended total overhaul of the youth orientation of four-year colleges and universities and an enrollment expansion in the 30-and-over age bracket. "Colleges and universities will have to be redesigned," one of them reported, "with the needs of the elderly uppermost in mind."

That report forecast:

- A new, revolutionary movement led by those over 50 because of their growing numbers and importance in our society (Americans over 50 today make up almost one-quarter of the nation's population and comprise the fastest-growing age segment);
- New measures of beauty and morality based on older rather than younger "models";
- A radical shift in emphasis from chronological age to "functional" age, a new emphasis that will open vast job opportunities for the older man and woman, and a new dependency on older Americans to perform a wide variety of public services. "The quality of public services will deteriorate," the study said, "if the talents of the elderly are not used."

Some 12 per cent of older Americans still work. According to a Louis Harris poll, many more would work if they could. Some 4.4 million—or nearly two of every five who are retired—stopped work unwillingly. Among men, that figure jumps to 41 per cent; among the poor and the black, to about 50 per cent.

Many who are not working cite poor health as the reason. "It's reasonable to assume from these results that health is [an] excuse to cover up for other reasons, such as 'nobody wants me,'" the Harris poll reports.

Discrimination against older workers continues, although forbidden by law. One U.S. Senate study revealed that more than 40 per cent of all job openings it examined restricted employment to workers under 45. The Senate's Special Committee on Aging said that many older workers are finding themselves involuntarily retired because of subtle, or overt, acts of age bias.

"Our nation has failed to develop a clear-cut, effective policy to help...older workers," the committee said. "Fewer than 5 per cent of all new enrollees in manpower and training programs are 45 or older."

Relatively unnoticed, a new class of "elderly" poor is in the making—able, willing workers in their 50's and 60's who are being eased out of the job market. Unemployed workers over 45 remained over the 1 million mark during 1976, a jump of more than 50 per cent in four years. Their numbers added to the 14.5 million men and women age 45 through 64 who have withdrawn from the labor force, who have simply stopped looking for work. If just one-fifth of this latter group wants and needs employment, that would raise the real unemployment for those above 45 by 3 million.

"In terms of the sheer numbers of people involved, retirement or the prospect of retirement should be regarded as a major social force in the U.S. today," reported the Special Committee on Aging.

"The present system of compulsory retirement from faithful employment solely on the basis of age is completely unrealistic..." says Dr. Irving Wright, clinical professor of medicine at Cornell's School of Medicine. "We must provide older people with the opportunity for work commensurate with their abilities rather than with their years..."

Eighty-six per cent of men and women 18 through 64, and 79 *per cent of those who are responsible for hiring and firing* told pollsters for the Harris organization that no one should be forced to retire because of age if he or she wants to continue working and can perform necessary duties.

"These results," suggests the poll, "represent a strong public mandate for the rollback of mandatory retirement guidelines and practices."

Twenty-nine per cent of those over 65 and still working would like to learn new skills to move into another career, according to the Harris Poll. Thirty-seven per

cent of men and women 55 through 64 are interested in job training.

"Those 65 and over [are] making a substantial economic contribution through full and part-time employment, but... there remain well over 4 million older people who would like to work and be paid for it. They are not counted as unemployed in official statistics but if they were, the unemployment rate nationwide would be nearly double what it is today," the Harris organization reported.

"While some may welcome mandatory retirement, others... see it as an injustice, both to themselves and to society. For not only does forced retirement deprive many older people of the opportunity to work, it also deprives society of the energies and talents of many capable and qualified older workers."

Twenty-two per cent of those over 65 do volunteer work. Eighty-one per cent of those under 65 — and the same percentage of executives responsible for hiring and firing — say that those over 65 "usually make good volunteers."

Ironic considering the number of older persons out of work.

The rise of elder power: Only in the past few years have men and woman 65 and older begun to realize what they can achieve through public relations and in the voting booth. Although this age group comprises slightly more than 10 per cent of the nation's population, it accounted for 17 per cent of the vote in the last national election, far more proportionately than any other age segment in the nation.

"Our decade is witnessing the rise of a very different generation of elders," says Margaret Kuhn, founder of the Gray Panthers, a political action group of the elderly. "We live longer. We're more vigorous physically. We're better educated and more articulate. And we are becoming aware of how our society puts us down. I would hope that the revolution of the elders, contrary to other revolutions, would be a unifying force in [our] society.... Age is the great universalizer. We're all growing old, every one of us. The problem is how to deal with growing old."

The power of men and women over 65 is just beginning to coalesce. Retired men and women generally have not only valuable experience, but sufficient time and community contacts, fewer family obligations and a potential for free thinking unhampered by career ambitions. As fragmented groups become better coordinated and as they learn to work more closely with those younger who share their goals, their influence will continue to grow.

This power is an important

new force in America. Most men and women over 65 find it hard at first to do what others in our country have done for decades: stand and demand attention for issues they consider important. But they are learning. They are learning quickly to touch the pressure points in our society.

The "Destroyers": Attitudes of course can destroy. The unknowing insist: A retarded child cannot learn. The American Indian will not work. The useful lives of our parents and grandparents end somewhere between 60 and 70.

Mythology. But myths form strong walls, all-including walls that efficiently shut off segments of our society.

For example:

Myth: Most older people are disabled. *Fact:* Eighty-nine per cent of everyone over 65 lives in the community, totally self-sufficient. Only 7 per cent are confined to beds or to their homes. Just 4 per cent live in institutions.

Myth: Most older men and women suffer from serious mental deterioration and senility. *Fact:* Intelligence, as measured in tests of comprehension and knowledge, shows little or no decline for the average older person. Says one physician: "Mental deterioration rarely occurs among normal people before their eighties." Evidence indicates the ability to think and reason *increases* with age if those faculties are given sufficient use.

Myth: Older people cannot cope with change. *Fact:* They give up jobs, a way of life, often move into a smaller home or to a different community. These changes are greater than those faced by many younger men and women.

But attitudes can also heal. It appears that support may be beginning to form for a basic change in the way we feel about and treat older Americans. A Harris poll disclosed that 81 per cent of those responding under age 65 believe a "need exists for people to join together to work toward improving the conditions and social status of people over 65." Thirty-seven per cent of the same age group said they would likely join a group "organized to work toward improving the conditions and social status of people over 65." Fifty-five per cent more said they would "support those goals."

Concluded the poll: "The public has a heavy conscience... about the plight of the elderly in this country...." ■

Elder power: On the rise as they realize the muscle of the vote and a concerted vocal effort.

A Case Study:

Los Angeles Valley College, Where Jobs Are Found and Artificial Walls Begin to Crumble

The community college, a national phenomenon only in the last decade in this country, is a logical place where an organized effort to solve many of the problems that affect older men and women might begin. Unlike four-year colleges and universities, even those that are publicly financed, community colleges function closer to the people they serve. Their basic charge is education, and education in its fullest sense "is the process by which man learns to understand and *exert control over* his environment [emphasis added]. Education...should be regarded as an experience continuing through the lifespan, not something turned off like a spigot at the termination of adolescence. Education...is part of the search for meaning of life, and life should be meaningful as long as there is breath in one's body."[1]

Community colleges, 1,200 of them throughout the nation, have the mandate from their state legislatures to help men and women above the age of 18. This provides them a unique platform. Almost from the outset, community colleges have aided more than the traditional college student, one who moves on to college immediately upon conclusion of high school. Nationally, the average age of the community-college student today is 29.

Community service in a variety of ways beyond the traditional understanding of education is bringing the community college closer to the needs of its area. Los Angeles Valley College is one example.

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in 1974 gave the Los Angeles Community College District—the largest district in the country—a one-year grant. The primary goal: Set up a workable and reproducible program to place men and women over age 60 in part-time jobs.

The district turned the assignment over to Valley College, a school of 23,000 students located in the north of the city. One hundred and fifty thousand men and women over 60 live within Valley College's receiving area.

The details of what followed are simply stated. But the implications are enormous. Under the

[1] Academy for Educational Development, *Never Too Old to Learn*, New York, New York, 1974, p. 9

guidance of an experienced educator and administrator, Lois Hamer, the first-year effort was extremely successful. Using two job locators and three counselors—all over 60—the newly formed Senior Adult Program placed 101 men and women in part-time jobs during the first year, well over the first-year target of 45. A Gold Card program, which allows those over 60 free access to all Valley College activities, experienced a 300 per cent jump to 8,481 card holders as of Spring, 1977. Seven hundred and seven card holders are taking college courses for credit. (Eighty per cent of them have a B average or better in contrast with 40 per cent of the total student body.) Two thousand more older men and women take courses without credit. Virtually all of the Gold Card holders join in the school's cultural events.

"They have become a real and welcome presence on the campus," says Nelson Tucker, 22, an officer of the college's Spirit Club, a booster organization composed of younger students. "They attend most school functions. They make as much noise cheering at ballgames as we do. In just a few years they have become a part of this school."

Dale Ormond, 20, a Valley College student who has worked part-time in the Senior Adult Program office for three years, says, "When I was hired for this job, I went home with some apprehension; how would I, I wondered, get along with all these older people? My friends worried about me: 'You're going to work with all those old people'?

"I've learned. We had been sheltered, each from the other. I've learned more in this office about education, religion and basic humanity than I have in school or in church. I've learned about older men and women. I've learned we're all alike. I went to a disco dance the other night, and half the dancers there were our Gold Card students. I've added a new dimension to my life just working in this office. My arti-

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Harry Abbit: From illness and apathy, a new beginning

Harry Abbit had been forced to stop working in 1973 after his second heart attack. A former furniture-showroom manager, he had worked 60-hour weeks for most of his adult life. Ordered by his physician to retire if he wanted to live, Abbit slowed down to zero. And he began to feel useless. "Doing nothing, I became depressed, nervous. I thought I was just waiting to die."

Mr. Abbit, always an active man, crawled into a shell. He ended all social activities. He remained at home all day. Pressure began to mount on his wife. Mr. Abbit consulted his physician for aid, received only a prescription for a tranquilizer. He took the pills for two years, but all they did was keep him in a state of perpetual drowsiness.

Still, Mr. Abbit knew that he "had enough ability to be useful to someone as a volunteer." He heard Lois Hamer speak about the Senior Adult Program one day and literally followed her back to her office to sign up.

Today, he works 12 hours a week at Valley College helping service Gold Card holders, delivering meals to shut-ins and driving older people to group luncheons.

He is also taking courses on campus, including one in Self-Assertiveness.

The man who sat around his house for two years drowsy and withdrawn now cycles five miles daily and swims several times a week—always four lengths of a 90-foot pool. His weight has dropped from 193 pounds to a more-healthful 145. He and his wife are planning a six-week, 6,000-mile auto vacation.

"I was something less than human before," he says. "Now I feel I have returned to life." ■

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ficial walls have long ago come down."

The program began late in 1974. The first job placement occurred January 2, 1975. Within six weeks, the full quota of 45 jobs was oversubscribed: 18 with employers in the area of religion, 23 with non-profit organizations, five with business firms. A management consultant was retained the following month to help develop and evaluate the system.

The college district treated the Senior Adult Program as one of its regular activities and provided it with all the support any college activity received.

Members were entitled to enroll in as many courses as they wanted, up to 18½ semester units. The older students were subject to all the district's policies. Few accommodations were made for them.

The success of the experiment during just the first six months—76 jobs filled, 80 additional offers waiting for candidates—led to an additional grant by the Clark Foundation during the year and a later decision to share second-year costs with Valley College. The college allocated $45,000 for the second year in spite of a major reduction in its over-all budget.

Because the program was to include both work and classroom study, older men and women had to take at least three credits of course work at the college. The first class developed for them, "Personal Development," was taught initially by Miss Hamer. The thrust of the curriculum: enhancing self-esteem. (Older Americans often share the low regard for age held by our society.) The work consisted of public speaking and instruction in advocacy—researching and writing papers on issues concerning older adults.

Many of the class were so pleased with themselves afterwards ("I never knew I could do these things") that they decided to take courses with younger students for additional credit. They had been afraid to compete before. A group also asked permission to address, and did testify before, a State Senate committee concerning problems of the older person.

The men and women who came to the Senior Adult Program for jobs ranged from eighth-

grade drop-outs to Ph.D's. Many were talented and articulate. Others had few skills. But they all needed work—for the money or for their inner well-being.

Based on the college's experience with employment programs for disadvantaged groups, wages at the start were subsidized by the college (with Clark Foundation funds) on a sliding scale: 50 per cent for business; 70 per cent for tax-supported institutions and 80 per cent for such non-profit groups as churches. However, in the case of older workers, it became apparent that the subsidies were not necessary, and they were ended in July, 1975. Virtually all of the employers except those in the non-profit area said the subsidy played a minor role in their decision to hire older men and women. Jobs filled under the subsidy, except with non-profit organizations, did not generally end when the subsidy period expired.

Evaluation of the older worker: Mrs. Doris Manoff, project director for a federally funded hot lunch program (serving 750 meals daily to the elderly in seven locations as well as delivering lunches to shut-ins) hired 10 older men and women ages 63 to 72, together with 10 younger employees. The former work as hostesses in the dining areas or as drivers for those needing transportation.

"Each older employee brings a dependability and a loyalty second to no others I have seen," Mrs. Manoff says. "They are conscientious. They refuse to take off sick days. They come in on time and stay late if necessary without complaint. They perform their jobs just as the others do. I expect the same from them as I do from our younger men and women. We just don't *think* of them as older men and women.

"They're vital and motivated and anxious to learn. They want to succeed, for the program and themselves. I feel a sense of good fortune at having them."

The older men and women bring another advantage. "They have a rapport with the men and women who come to the meals that no one younger could have. They are one of them. So they *listen* to what the older people say and in turn they can say things when necessary that I cannot."

Mrs. Manoff offers advice to prospective employers of older men and women. "Jump in there. Gray hairs mean absolutely nothing."

That is the consensus of a cross-section of employers who have hired members of the

Valley College effort. David Green, owner of a small independent grocery store, employed 68-year-old Victor Codran to stock the produce department.

"He was better than most younger people who have worked for me," says Mr. Green. "He wanted to work. He wanted to help me. He did things no one asked him to. If he thought of a better way to trim and set up a lettuce display, for example, he did it. He used his mind.

"We're a self-service store. If a customer were to ask most of our younger employees where an item was, she'd be lucky if he pointed in the right direction. Victor voluntarily helped customers. When the produce department was slow, he would work in groceries. He wanted to keep busy."

Clarey Barbiaux, liquor store owner, prefers "older employees to younger every time." He hired "Pat" Paternoster, 71, who had been referred by Valley College.

Counsel from an employer of the elderly: "Jump in there. Gray hairs mean absolutely nothing. They are vital, motivated, anxious to learn."

"The kids are stronger and can move heavy cases around," he says. "But that's their only advantage and it's not a significant one. I want older people. I had a 77-year-old man work for me until recently. The customers loved him."

Katherine Zettas, 69, was timid and any office skills she may have had were rusty when she was sent by Valley College to the Woodside Capital Corporation, a multi-faceted financial concern. She was afraid to take a telephone message for fear of getting it wrong.

Eighteen months later, she confidently searched out another job that paid 50 per cent more.

"Her transformation was a marvel to observe," says Woodside Vice President Martin Lubarsky. "Within three months, she had learned her job so well that she received two raises from us. By the time she left for her new job, she had mastered the switchboard, an extremely complex filing system and all the other work office personnel have to handle. And she actually

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Ruth Towbin: At 74, zest, vitality and a concern for the poor and weak

As she entered her 75th year recently, Ruth Towbin was able to note, "That I had reached the prime of life and still had many things to do before I am ready to call it a day." She had passed the Biblical span of three score and 10 and was still doing just about anything she always had done. True, she depended increasingly on a hearing aid, she had to watch her blood pressure and an arthritic knee flared up at times; but she was on the whole in good physical condition and as mentally alert as she had been throughout her life. As she put it, "I was learning to accommodate myself to the inconveniences of the adult development process which many give the uncomplimentary term of 'aging'. I did not feel old and I did not feel I was aging. Developing, yes; aging, no."

A child immigrant from Russia, Ruth grew up in the slums of Philadelphia. She began to speak English well within six months after she arrived in this country, amazed her teachers with an ability to do arithmetic "in her head" and by fourth grade won a schoolwide essay contest concerning "the father of our country." Not too bad for a new American. She learned English as a second language and became adept at this most irregular of all irregular tongues; grammar, punctuation, facile construction were, in her term, "a snap."

War, discrimination, materialism, the desperation of the poor enraged her. She took poet Robert Browning to task in an eighth grade literature class for a line in *Pippa Passes:* "God's in his heaven; all's right with the world." She decided early that she would join with others interested in working for peace and the brotherhood of man on earth. She was—and is—a very "modern" woman. There is nothing

at all "old-fashioned" about her ideas.

Formally retired as a book editor, she actively continues her work today in organizations concerned with peace, an end to poverty, racism and pollution. She was for several years volunteer executive secretary of the local Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice, and is presently a member of Women for Legislative Action and of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

She came out of "retirement" in 1974, at the age of 71, when a friend told her of the embryonic program at Los Angeles Valley College. Ruth brought her office skills—an ability to take 180 words a minute of dictation and type 100 words a minute—to the office of the Senior Adult Program. ■

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became sort of cocky, very proud of herself — with reason."

Mr. Lubarsky's firm needed no persuading to hire Mrs. Zettas. Its in-house counsel had been a retired attorney who worked for them until he died at age 72. The manager of the company's Boston office is a retired banker, 67. Woodside recently hired a part-time bookkeeper, 71.

"We would hire another older man or woman from Valley College without hesitation," says Mr. Lubarsky. "Every older man or woman who has worked here has been far more careful with his or her work than our other employees and didn't try to take as many shortcuts with what they were doing, shortcuts that often ended in errors."

Mention "Hazel Scott" to Mrs. Shari Bright, vice president of Incolay Art Studies, and Mrs. Bright's face breaks into a grin. "Hazel was marvelous. She was aware, quick in spite of being 72 and did everything a girl of 20 would do. She had great common sense and used her head rather than ask countless questions when she encountered a problem. Older men and women are a joy to work with."

Most of Valley College's Gold Card holders were placed in jobs in non-profit organizations, many on the college campus.

"We've never had a more successful group of employees than the older men and women who have worked here for the past four years," says Mrs. Mary Dimon, supervisor of the school's statistics department. "They have extraordinary rapport with the faculty, and their maturity and life experience bring new learning dimensions into our workshop."

"Without exception, they tend to be more committed than those in other age groups," says Noel Korn, coordinator of the school's Learning Center, where two men work. "They are responsible. To them, their jobs *are* jobs, not just putting in time. They will share ideas, see problems and suggest improvements. We assessed the abilities of Dr. Adolphe De Jong, a retired chiropractor, and decided he would be ideal in helping students find and use appropriate resources. Another older worker, Michael Kramer, filled requests for sound tracks, video tapes and maintained office records."

Valley College demonstrated that a senior worker's project is compatible with the mission of the community college; that it can be established and managed

successfully within the existing institution; that a project director supported by several specialized assistants can develop and fill jobs for senior workers and organize and conduct classroom work (*Facts In Brief*, page 24).

In evaluating the program, the management consultant affirmed the belief that Valley College's model could be duplicated. The community college is best suited to carry out this assignment, he said, because its primary mission is to offer instruction in vocational and technical fields.

The consultant judged the management function of the project as carried out at all levels —the central district office, the college office and the project office—as effective.

"The remarkable start of the program, achieved through a crash effort," he noted, "was possible only because of the complex...and creative cooperation by the many people and offices involved with the senior program.

"The employers interviewed are pleased with the purpose and results of the program as well as with the manner in which it is administered....The seniors interviewed are pleased with the program including the 'study' component."

But There Were Problems: "The administrative help provided by the district...is offset, in part at least, by the bureaucratic requirements of the large and complex district," the consultant said. "Under district policy, no money could be spent before the approval of the offered grant by the district's Board of Trustees. As a result, the program began formally in January rather than October. A nine-school district develops a large and complex administrative hierarchy along with proliferating policies and procedures," he said. "New creative and innovative projects such as the Senior Adult Program cannot escape enmeshment in this system."

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"We've never had a more successful group of employees than the older men and women who have worked here for the past four years."

Anne Remoff: "Our politicians speak of human rights; that should include us"

Mrs. Anne Remoff, 65, a widow for 11 years, heard a radio commercial for the Senior Adult Program and applied for work. She was hired for 15 hours a week as a teacher's aide with children of Valley College students.

"I needed the money and I was lonely," she said, "so I applied. But I found far more than salary and people to talk with."

The years immediately preceding had been difficult ones for Mrs. Remoff. A widow, she had contracted a rare form of paralysis in 1968. She was suddenly and totally paralyzed and not expected to live. If she did survive, doctors said she would be bed-ridden or confined to a wheel-chair for the rest of her life.

Mrs. Remoff is a strong-minded women. "That was nonsense," she says today. "I knew I would get well. I never had any doubt."

When she was out of danger, she was transferred to a convalescent home. Therapy began and she worked hard at it. Within two years, she had recovered fully. But most of her savings were wiped out, her spirits were depleted and she longed to return to useful activity outside of her home. Then she heard a public service announcement on the radio and applied for the job at Valley College.

"I remember when my grandfather retired and 'became old' right in front of us," she was to say later. "Then World War II began and he found a job as a carpenter. Suddenly, he was 20 years 'younger'—and alive again. When I received the job at Valley College, I understood for the first time how he must have felt.

"I had felt so abandoned by society. And then I was back in the mainstream of life. I was only an aide, but I was never

treated like one. I was important. All of us were important. To someone who hadn't felt important for a long time, that was marvelous. I couldn't wait to get to work each day."

Mrs. Remoff, an activist, is far from being an introverted woman. She is an active member of the Gray Panthers and speaks out frequently to groups concerning their work. ("Our politicians speak of human rights; that should include us.") She is studying the Social Security system in preparation for an advocacy role in making the system "more realistic." ■

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19]

Similar programs for older men and women can best be duplicated, the consultant said, within an existing and traditional educational institution. Other groups such as government employment agencies, labor unions, agencies aiding older persons, large corporations and ad hoc organizations would not do as well.

Noting the eventual placement of part-time employees by Valley College without partial subsidization of their wages, the consultant suggested a better return per dollar of investment might be achieved by using money solely for employment aid and to withdraw from any thought of subsidization. Should those placed through the program continue to be subsidized, he added, experiments should be attempted to judge the optimum level of subsidization. The maximum, he said, could be less than the amount initially offered by the college.

The Valley College program ran into difficulty its second year. District certification requirements forced the two job seekers to resign. Successors had to be found and trained. Only 35 jobs were filled for a two-year total of 136. Valley missed the 1975-76 goal of 200 job placements by one-third. However, in November 1976, pleased by the total job effort, Valley College assigned the job placement function of the Senior Adult Program to the regular college placement office. This left the adult program office more time to recruit older men and women into the overall program.

The work attrition rate, 44.6 per cent in 1974-75, rose to 54.8 per cent the following year. Half of the terminations were by the employees. Part of the reason during the second year was a new requirement that employees on campus take 12 credit units. Relatively few of the older men and women wanted to study that much and work 20 hours a week. A number of them simply sought jobs off campus. Sixty-eight per cent of the employers reported they would hire another older person.

Although figures aren't known, a number of those placed by the college in their initial jobs recognized their personal success and obtained better jobs on their own, usually for more money and, in some instances, for full-time employment rather than part-time.

Factors For Success: Three significant reasons for the success of the program at Valley College stand out sharply: the most essential—and the reason it is singled out here—is leadership. This quality, both of experience and of human values, is vital to an effort that will benefit both the community college and the older men and women involved. In short, a gerontologist who thinks this project is "a good idea" will not necessarily succeed—unless he or she truly appreciates the humanistic basis of the program and is willing to persevere until the entire community understands the values to all concerned.

Lois Hamer, the project director, experienced both with educators and older men and women, moved decisively when the program began in 1974. Intelligent, personable and articulate, she was able to lead the often-apprehensive seniors quietly and calmly until they gained confidence both in their jobs and their new campus life.

The second factor: the staff assembled by Miss Hamer was capable, became imbued with the objectives of the Senior Adult Program and worked extremely hard to achieve them.

And finally: the college administration was quick to find ways to make the Senior Adult Program work when problems, either of a softening job market or the red-tape common to a large school district, threatened to slow or end the senior effort.

"The key here," says Lois Hamer, "is the community services dean. It's often necessary to break rules to make a program work and you can't break rules unless you have an understanding dean, as we did, to run interference." ■

Three factors spelled success: Extraordinary leadership, staff enthusiasm and the vigorous support of the school administration.

Facts In Brief

What does a program such as that of Los Angeles Valley College cost to begin and to continue? How long does it take to enter full operation? What does the team do to make the effort successful? What are the accomplishments?

I. Range of 12-Month Start-Up Costs:

A. Full-blown Program:

STAFF	
Director	$15,000 to $17,000
Secretary	6,000 to 10,000
Job Developers (2)	8,000 to 12,000 (each)
Peer Counselors (3)	16,000 to 20,000 (combined; $3.50 per hour; 20 hours per week)
Student Aide	3,500 to 5,000 ($2.49 per hour; 20 hours per week)
OTHER	
Telephone	1,200
Travel	1,000
Equipment	800
TOTAL	$59,500 to $79,000

B. Augmenting an Existing Older-Student Program:
By the addition of one or two job developers ($8,000 to $12,000 each), a director of a cultural/educational program for older students can make an impressive start on a job placement project, thus attracting money from other sources.

The following costs were not included by the college in the program budget above: college support services, most overhead charges, staff fringe benefits and temporary job subsidies.

Projected costs for 1977-78, the fourth year at Los Angeles Valley Community College:*

STAFF	
Director	$18,000
Community and student service assistants; former job developers (2)	15,000 (each)
Secretary	10,000

Program assistants (2)	5,000 (each)
Student aide	2,700 ($2.61 per hour; 20 hours per week)
Teachers for special classes for the retired (22 classes each semester)	10,500 ($12.84 per hour)

OTHER

Utilities	300
Travel	300
Mileage	700
Supplies	1,000
Telephone	1,200
Equipment	75
TOTAL	$84,775

*Again, this represents costs for a full effort. A typical program would cost closer to $30,000.

College support services, overhead and staff fringe benefits were not included in the program budget.

II. Start-Up Time: The program required two to four weeks to hire staff. The first job placement took place within two months from that point.

III. Personnel Required: Rare qualities were essential in all staff members. They had to be willing to challenge established ways of getting work done. They required the unique combination of intellectual capacity and human concern. Each had to work as a member of a team. Each also had to be able to absorb societal "punches." For example, pressures resulting from bureaucracy, the myths besetting older men and women in our society, the often-heard comment that, "Older people take necessary jobs away from younger men and women."

Job developers should have experience outside the academic community to allow them more rapport with prospective employers and employees. They must be sensitive to the needs and thoughts of older men and women.

Peer counselors ideally should have some background in matching applicants to vacancies. They should be able to counsel—both employers and employees. Ethnic staff representation according to the composition of the community served is helpful.

The student aide brings a number of advantages. He or she frees older staff members by doing many routine assignments. Most important, many older people, no longer exposed to young people to any degree, bask in the contact with a warm, caring younger man or woman.

Volunteers are important because in addition to the work they provide in the office, they serve as the eyes and ears of the program in the community. They help bring in hesitant newcomers. In the case of Los Angeles Valley Community College, they systematically contacted each of the thousands of adults who had already approached the college and enrolled many of them into the program.

IV. How to make the program successful: Procedures followed basic lines. Resources were matched with needs. Categories of job vacancies were identified. Areas were selected that did not compete with jobs normally filled by younger people; for example, jobs where experience was more important than recent education.

Part-time jobs and minimum pay were emphasized. The added virtues of older workers were emphasized: dependability, experience, reluctance to shift on a whim from one job to another, leaving employers with sudden vacancies.

Appropriate staff members contacted every group in the area that indicated potential for aid. Local media became a valuable and continuing source of support. Elected officials from throughout the area were visited by constituents. Their response was immediate, forceful and continuing.

Support from the college was essential. The Admissions Office, for example, was flexible in allowing entrants for spring semester classes to enroll as late as mid-April, despite the fact the term had started in February.

Candidates for job vacancies were screened closely by the staff. Three applicants were sent to each prospective employer. Everyone placed was followed closely, both to forestall possible problems and to see that good communication existed between employer and employee.

V. Accomplishments: A strong staff working consistently toward a goal can find and fill job and service vacancies for virtually every category of retired applicant. As noted, Los Angeles Valley Community College, for example, exceeded its goal in several months and went on to oversubscribe it, even before the community was completely alerted to its existence. Experiences provided on the campus to older men and women, in addition to jobs and volunteer work, brought to them the kind of literal joy summed up by one woman who said, "Whenever I come here, I feel as if I'm walking on my tip-toes." ■

Miami-Dade Investigates Job Opportunities for the Elderly

Miami-Dade Community College serves an area—Greater Miami, Fla.—that contains a higher percentage of residents 65 and older than any other site in the nation, 13.6 per cent.

It's believed that before long, 45 per cent of all Dade County residents will be 65 and over. Those above age 75 doubled in the decade ending in 1970. "It's possible," Miami-Dade College officials note, "that the next 20 years could reshape the demographic pattern of the state [and make] Florida the gerontology capital of the eastern seaboard."

The Clark Foundation awarded Miami-Dade (the largest two-year college in the nation, with 43,000 students) a grant for a one-year effort. It was titled Project Elderly. The triple intent: to survey job opportunities for retired men and women in the area; to design a model program to train older workers for available jobs where necessary; and to develop an educational curriculum for older residents.

Beginning March 1, 1975, the college polled 1,611 employers in five categories—business, health, criminal justice, education and religion—to assess their attitudes toward older persons.

The older worker was viewed favorably by employers queried. They believed that older men and women would be more punctual, more careful about job details, in need of less supervision and more serious about work than younger employees.

The survey found that three types of jobs were most open to older men and women: sales, bookkeeping and office work. Forty job vacancies were located; 17 of them were filled by mid-1976.

Miami-Dade set up a clearing house for older persons who wanted to volunteer. A bureau dispatched older men and women to speak throughout the area on subjects ranging from aging to recreation. Two thousand persons attended those lectures.

The college effort identified a number of unfilled needs of older men and women: among them, continuing education courses, many given at locations

throughout the area to minimize transportation problems; modification of courses to meet particular needs, such as retirement plans, exercise, consumer practices, drug use and community resources; central sources of information among all groups dealing with older men and women concerning available educational and human services; and provision of placement services for both paid and volunteer workers.

Gratification for the men and women staff members of Project Elderly came in many ways. One was in the form of letters written by men and women over 65 who had obtained jobs through their aid:

- "It was hard to believe that you would not quit until you found a suitable job for me. I am very happy to report that I got the job at the insurance company you referred me to."
- "I can't believe all the things you've done to find me suitable employment. I'm delighted to inform you that I was hired for the job you sent me to."
- "I had answered endless newspaper ads and employment service appointments for interviews with no luck. You sent me to quite a few job openings and although I didn't make a connection, you stayed with me. The last referral worked out fine and I ended up with a full time, permanent job."
- "Quite frankly, I had given up—on the possibility of finding employment and on myself. Your efforts on my behalf not only secured a job for me, they restored my faith in myself." ■

Efforts for seniors pay off at all levels: the community college, society and, not least, the elderly themselves.

NYC Community College Successfully Increases Awareness of Older Adults' Employment Needs

New York City Community College in 1971 began a series of programs to deliver services to older men and women—principally classes, lectures, seminars and nutrition programs in 54 senior centers, homes of the aged and community buildings. Enrollment totaled 4,500.

The college had the largest, most aggressive and most entrepreneurial program for older adults—in this case over age 45—in New York. It also exerted significant influence on other schools within the City University of New York system, and served men and women at low income levels.

The Clark Foundation in 1974 asked the college to undertake a two-year effort to investigate career opportunities—full and part-time and volunteer—for older persons in the Brooklyn borough of New York. Areas examined were: higher education, health services (especially gerontology and home care), business service operations and personalized repair and craft services.

Against a backdrop of the highest national unemployment rates since the Depression, the college had to modify a number of its original plans. The school developed a successful work-study proposal for the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare to help older adults who needed to improve job skills. They attended classes while continuing with their employment. The $75,000 grant, first of its kind awarded by HEW, was received with the anticipation that its success at New York City Community College could lead to a citywide effort dedicated to older adults in education and make a significant impact on a variety of employment areas through the community-college system.

New York City Community College raised the visibility of the employment needs of older adults. In cooperation with a quasi-public and non-profit employment service for older workers, it established "public information" desks on the floors of 10 banks in downtown Brooklyn. More than 1,300 men and women were interviewed at those desks within the first year; they comprised both potential job applicants and potential employers. Fifty-five jobs were filled during the grant period with the indication that job openings and job applicants would continue to be generated for at least six months after the information effort in the banks was concluded. ■

Older Men and Women Want to Learn New Career Skills at Pace University

Pace University in New York City, although not a community college, represents a different and interesting approach. Pace established an Active Retirement Center (PARC) to introduce older men and women to a sampling of special enrichment courses. The concept—"Retire to a University"—was sound. The program had 107 members within a year. But the members wanted more than enrichment. They wanted to be allowed to attend regular classes without credit—and to learn new skills that would allow them to return to the work force full- or part-time.

Research by the Center staff revealed only openings for clerical employees. The older students preferred work in such fields as tutoring, counseling and research. For that, they required training. Aid was needed to develop sufficient job opportunities to satisfy the demands of the older men and women.

Because of the success of Pace's Active Retirement Center and the quality of its leadership, the Clark Foundation in October 1975 awarded the university a three-year grant to expand the Center and to develop an effective job and volunteer placement effort.

First-year goals: to complete research concerning new careers; to place 50 members in part-time jobs; to begin a pre-retirement program; to continue the education work of the Center; and to increase its membership to 300 men and women.

Pace learned that people with specific skills are in demand regardless of their age.

The aims for the second year: a membership of 500; increased job opportunities; establishment of pre-retirement workshops in three private companies; and the development and documentation of comprehensive procedures for the overall program.

By the end of the third year, Pace was to bring Center membership to 700 and expand PARC to the university's campus in White Plains, N.Y., a suburban community north of New York City.

If successful, the three-year effort would be the largest of its type in any private university in the country. It would demonstrate both demand and the consequent financial support in terms of tuition and membership fees.

Center membership by Spring 1977 grew to 430. Members, 55 and older, live in all five boroughs of New York City and neighboring New Jersey. Their backgrounds, interests and incomes vary widely. They share a common need for identity, intellectual stimulation and job direction. Women outnumber men heavily but male membership grew from 9 per cent of Center enrollment in October 1975 to 16-1/2 per cent by Spring 1977.

Pace opened all undergraduate courses to Center members—including those on the White Plains campus and the campus at Pleasantville, N.Y.—at minimum cost on a space-available basis and without credit. Center membership is $10 a semester. Members 65 and older can take courses for credit at $25 a unit, one-third the usual charge. Special programming solely for Center members continues. One of the programs, devoted to pre-retirement needs, was opened to personnel representatives of area companies.

Through its job research, Pace learned that people with specific skills — accountants, bilingual social workers, computer programmers—are in demand regardless of their age. Pace also

Sixty-two placements were made during the first year, 12 over the target. From a 67-year-old woman: "I have found a new career as an instructor in a geriatric summer camp."

found that small law firms might be interested in using trained people of retirement age as part-time researchers. The faculty and staff indicated a willingness to experiment with retired men and women serving as research assistants.

Job placement efforts began unsteadily. Two members of the Active Retirement Center, trained in business but not in personnel work, were hired as job developers. A retired manager of the New York State Employment Service replaced them. Sixty-two placements were made during the first year, 12 over the goal. Among them: a number of tutors, two librarians and several library clerks, several secretaries, a market research interviewer and an arts and crafts counselor.

(The 67-year-old arts and crafts counselor wrote to PARC in amazement shortly after her placement: "From all appearances, I have found a new career as an instructor in a geriatric summer camp. The woman who directs the section came to me after the first two days and said, 'I've been here 20 years and we have never had anyone like you.'")

The advisor to international students wrote to Center director Abbie Jean Brownell: "I want to express my pleasure with the tutoring services the international students have been receiving from the members of PARC. The tutors are involved and dedicated professionals. The tutor who has been assisting several students with English has befriended and enriched the lives of these young people from overseas in immeasurable ways. This program is clearly one providing gains for all concerned."

The Center devoted a portion of its first year to seeking out the kinds of pre-retirement services that could best be offered to interested employers and to employees facing retirement. Seminars were attended by representatives of 37 companies. An all-day workshop on "Costs and Benefits of Pre-Retirement Planning" drew 116 men and women representing many of the largest corporations in the New York metropolitan area, professional pre-retirement services, universities, government agencies, unions and community organizations. ■

"A Look Backward—and Forward..."

By Merrell M. Clark
Vice President
The Edna McConnell
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The Clark Foundation has developed the most extensive program in aging in the history of private philanthropy. Unlike most government programs, however, which tend to view older people essentially as needy consumers of service, the private initiative of the Foundation has been based on the notion that older people represent an increasingly underutilized human resource for the public good. Accordingly, most of our funds have been allocated to the creation of opportunities in job categories not previously thought of as appropriate for older workers—either paid or unpaid—where the energies of able older people could be directed to pressing social and economic problems of their communities (serving in school districts, in *adult* reading academies, in colleges and universities, in hospital out-reach programs, in home care and in legal services). Generating *demand* for the growing supply of able elders, obviously, has been the fundamental problem addressed by the Foundation.

In addition, however, we have thought it worthwhile to foster experiments in the referral and placement techniques which help older people find appropriate jobs or service. Some of the experimentation has focused on techniques—the "how-to-do-it"—but a broader question has been "*who* can do it?" Clearly the U.S. Employment Service and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act do a proportionately poor job of placing older workers. Only 21.2 per cent of older applicants (65 and older) received services from the Employment Service in 1974, and, in 1975, less than 1 per cent of participants in CETA were 65 and older. Even the fine Retired Senior Volunteer Program barely scratches 10 per cent of the surface of the 2 million older people who want to volunteer their time and experience but have not been asked.

Without reviewing here all of our experiments—including independent placement services—we have been interested from the outset in the role educational institutions might play in this process. The survey by the Academy for Educational Development, "Never Too Old To Learn," documented the sharp growth in college participation by older people. Many colleges have actively solicited older students and recruited them for special programs. But few do anything about job or volunteer placement of old students. "If colleges are helpful to young people in placing them in jobs or meaningful volunteer service, why not old people too?" we wondered.

The Valuable Lessons: The early experiments of community colleges, described in the brief report preceding, provided some valuable lessons:

1. Success is possible. Older people can be helped by community college personnel to find satisfying jobs.
2. Matching jobs and older jobseekers is very hard work, and the frustrations require unusual determination and creative solutions.
3. Many retirement-age students, as we suspected, are uninterested or simply unwilling to attempt to find work. Also, the fact that some employers don't want older men and women as workers is deeply ingrained, and some older people prefer not to be exposed to that reality unnecessarily.
4. A minority of older students, —between 5 per cent and 20 per cent—do want to work, are attracted to the entire college program because of the hope of finding work, and stick with the job-seeking process until they succeed.
5. The testimony of employers is virtually universal that older people are more reliable and dedicated workers. In addition, the latter are rejuvenated in the process of becoming economic contributors again. Others, who do not need additional income, are awakened to the economic contribution they make as volunteers.
6. There are as many part-time jobs available to old people as there are old people who are willing to seek them out with the help of a job developer. Although hard to find, the demand is there.
7. If all community colleges became proficient in older worker placements, they could become, overnight, the most important single vehicle of public policy for older workers' employment.

Although these experiments were narrowly confined to practical and straight-forward issues —given the presence of older job-seekers in the community, who should help them and how should they do it?—there are larger issues underlying the effort; very profound moral, social and economic issues.

1. The Teleological Issue: Now that this society has achieved such success in preserving long able life for most of its members, what is it for? What is the purpose toward which old people can bend their energies? Is it right to segregate the older years and condemn them to the essentially destructive roles of withdrawal and self-indulgence —as opposed to self-development, involvement, contribution and reward?

2. The Economic Issue: What is the public benefit which offsets the escalating cost of maintaining an able but idle elder work force? Now that it costs so much to remove older workers, is it still worth it? As we anticipate a huge expense in the future for subsidizing and providing income for our old members, what is that investment for—and do we realize an adequate return?

3. The Social Justice Issue: What is the humane justification for denying some men and women their sense of vocation at a fixed age? Why should a free society intervene in the personal vocation of one of its members, if that member happened to have been born in 1912, whereas if he had been born in 1914, he would be protected by age discrimination laws? Why is birth happenstance — date-of-birth — permissible prejudice, sanctioned by law and financed by government, while prejudices regarding other birth happenstances—race, sex—are unconstitutional?

The Future: As the able older population doubles over the next fifty years, and as older Americans gain in importance, from one in ten now to one in six —23 to 53 million—all segments of society will grapple with these issues. Especially, we believe, educators.

What is long life for? Should we segregate our elders and condemn them to destructive roles of withdrawal and self-indulgence?

As educators engage with the issues of a society whose older members are increasing—while its younger members are not—a renewed perception of the ancient meaning of vocation may emerge, and with it a deeper understanding of vocational and career education. So much of "vocational education" has become technical training for employment—a highly perishable process—that the meaning of vocation as a life calling has been diminished. Now that mainstream labor participation consumes such a small proportion of the normal, healthy lifespan, educators can address once again the most fundamental issues of life vocation among their older, retirement-aged students. "What do you feel called to do with the rest of your life? What are these years for? How can we help you develop your lifespan potential?" This reemergence of the fundamental relationship between education and vocation could improve the quality of education for all.

This reemergence of the fundamental relationship between education and vocation could improve the quality of education for all.

There will be a steady increase in college enrollment of old people over the next fifty years without benefit of special stimulation by private foundations. That is why none of the Foundation's funds have been allocated to increasing educational opportunity for old people (although expanded student enrollments have resulted from several of our grants). The only intent of our grants has been to discover what roles educational institutions can play in placing older people in positions which reflect their mature sense of vocation. We have learned, from many mistakes and from the dedicated and courageous leadership of administrators like Lois Hamer and her peers in other colleges, that the effort is worth it.

As a result, we already have taken the next step and have commissioned the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges to stimulate further experimentation and exchange of knowledge among its member institutions. Any effort to use the talents and energies of older people and to capture their

vocational yearnings is appropriate. Placements on campus and off campus, placements for pay and placements for love are all appropriate for some portion of the older student enrollment. We hope that many community colleges will recognize the job-seeking and vocational needs of older adults in their communities and will direct a portion of their energies and resources to meeting this need. At the present time, the economy looks much more hospitable to success in this venture than it did during the difficult period when the first successes were wrung out of a deeply troubled labor market.

Rewards for All: In pursuing these developments, we do so with a conviction that it is good for everyone involved:

It is good for community colleges

- to meet a valid community need of older worker employment
- to attract able, energetic and productive old people to their enrollments
- to meet other community needs and community college needs by directing the energies of able old people to meet them
- It is political wisdom to improve quality of life for older voters

It is good for old people

- to find a decent job or volunteer role that provides a new sense of meaning in life
- to have a vocational focus within the educational experience

It is good for society

- to recapture the social and economic contributions of our most experienced members
- to address important community problems with the expertise and energy of older workers and volunteers
- to gain this added important benefit from the public investment in community colleges.

Perhaps the greatest reward of all for this kind of involvement is to share the great pleasure which occurs time and time again—the pleasure of seeing a mature adult regain his or her confidence, channel his or her energies into a worthwhile job with incredible dedication, and become a new person. It is a visible transformation so profound you really are not surprised when an old student comes to you and says, with total candor, "I have returned to life." ■

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